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CIA: consensus language, Andropov profits

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The Central Intelligence Agency is recovering slowly from its self-inflicted wounds and from the wounds inflicted by the congressional investigations of the 1970s, a period during which it can be said with little exaggeration that many CIA activities ground to a halt.

Under William Casey, the Reagan-appointed CIA director, there has been the beginning of a recovery. However, it has been only a beginning, because:

1. Casey has refused, following his near-fatal mistake in appointing the controversial Max Hugel as his deputy, to risk taking into the CIA outsiders — non-career professionals — as is done frequently in the diplomatic service.

2. Making changes in career executive positions in a well-entrenched bureaucracy like that of the CIA is exceedingly difficult. There are only a handful of new faces in the top echelons of the Reagan-Casey CIA.

3. A large number of congressmen are unable to accept the need for a functioning CIA, let alone the need for a full-service intelligence agency. For them, technological means, like "spy-in-the-sky" satellites over Soviet air space would be sufficient.

4. Other congressmen, opposed to President Reagan's foreign policies but unwilling to risk a confrontation with the White House, use the CIA as the punching bag to express their disapproval of Reagan.

A weakened CIA — and that phrase describes its condition during the past decade — means a weakened America, especially so when the Soviet KGB has been operating in a free-swinging fashion in the West, specifically in the United States.

Under the direction of Yuri V. Andropov, KGB chairman from 1967 to 1982, and now general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, there began a mass infiltration of Soviet and

Soviet bloc secret agents into the United States. Their assignment: steal America's high-technology secrets and manipulate politics. What infiltration occurred was not so much a tribute to KGB skill as it was to the decline in counterintelligence capability of both the CIA and the FBI, a direct result of congressional action aided in part by the exposé of civil liberties abuses by both agencies against American citizens. The resultant reforms pushed by Congress and embodied in Department of Justice guidelines were positively catastrophic for U.S. intelligence organization and activity.

These reforms and guidelines for intelligence activity during the 1970s led to a more serious decline in the appreciation of the need for a full-service intelligence agency. By "full-service," I mean an agency with the capacity to conduct covert activities; to engage in clandestine collection of information; to prevent the United States from being manipulated by foreign intelligence services — most notably the KGB — through effective counterintelligence; and, last, to train analysts who, on the basis of the input from the first three functions, can supply U.S. policymakers useful, reliable and unpolarized estimates of the intentions of friendly or enemy countries.

During the years before the CIA probes, there was little public interest, except from James Bond fans, in the meaning of a full-service intelligence agency. Following the congressional hearings into U.S. intelligence, and the dissemination of hitherto secret documents about the activities of the intelligence community, a number of academics

set up in April 1979, with private foundation funding, what they called a Consortium for the Study of Intelligence under the auspices of the National Strategy Information Center. Among the academics were Professors Samuel P. Huntington, Robert Nisbet, Richard E. Pipes, Paul Seabury, James Q. Wilson, Adda B. Bozeman, John Norton

Moore, and others drawn primarily from law and the social sciences.

The basic purpose of the consortium was to provide "an institutional focus for a balanced, coherent understanding of the role of intelligence in a free society," to quote the CSI's founding statement. A second and more technical purpose, technical, that is, in professorial terms, was to encourage objective, scholarly, unclassified research into the relationship between intelligence, foreign affairs and U.S. decision-making.

Prior to establishment of the CSI, no educational, policy-oriented institute existed in the United States to examine the complex issue of intelligence in a democratic society in a balanced manner and to serve as an information source for university teachers and

journalists who might wish either to teach or to write about intelligence as a significant variable in decision-making.

Since 1979, the consortium has sponsored a series of six interrelated policy-oriented research colloquia which examined the organization and process of intelligence. The CSI brought together scholars, senior intelligence officials and policymakers from the United States and abroad, as well as journalists, to consider the complex issues associated with intelligence.

Five books have been published and a sixth is on the way, under the rubric "Intelligence Requirements for the 1980s," edited by Roy Godson, professor of government at Georgetown University. The series defines each element of intelligence and explains how each is symbiotically related to the others. More than 40 university faculties make use of the series of books, among them Yale, Penn State, Stanford, and Georgetown.

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CSI scholars and colloquia participants have helped re-establish the one-time consensus on the need for a full-service intelligence agency and full-service intelligence activities. This consensus is being tested right now in the debate on Capitol Hill over the problem of covert action in Central America by the executive branch of government.

As one who long has studied the problem of intelligence in a democratic society and who has discussed the problem with other academics, it is quite clear to me that presently U.S. intelligence is weak and inadequate for the trials ahead, especially in the areas of covert action, counterintelligence and analysis and estimates. The consensus for a full-service agency is there. The question which now exists is how to implement that consensus without bipartisan agreement between the White House and the Congress.

Meanwhile, Andropov profits.

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